

Item 4 – Equalities Update

Equalities Panel, 21 November 2016

1. Reason for this report coming to the Equalities Panel

- 1.1 Members of the Equalities Panel are asked to comment on the Council's progress in delivering equalities activities since the last meeting in June 2016, including actions set out in the Single Equality Scheme 2015-2018

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council developed a new Single Equality Scheme (SES) for April 2015 to March 2018. The scheme was approved by the Executive Councillor for Strategy and Transformation at Strategy and Resources Committee on 13 July 2015.
- 2.2 The SES identified 5 objectives for the Council's work on equalities issues and set out a total of 39 actions for the Council during 2015/16 to help deliver these objectives listed above. A further 30 actions were identified for delivery during the second year of the scheme in 2016/17.
- 2.3 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Panel with an update on progress with some of the key actions in the SES and other equalities activities since the last meeting in June 2016. Updates have not been provided on all actions in the scheme, as a full review will be presented to the Panel in June 2016.

3. Progress during 2016/17

- 3.1 **Residents Survey** (action 1.2 in the Single Equality Scheme) – The City Council commissioned an independent market research company to carry out a residents survey for the first time since 2011 to explore: residents' satisfaction with Council services; their views on which services should be prioritised in the Council's budget in future; and their preferred methods of communication

and engagement with the Council. The survey was sent to 4,400 randomly selected addresses and a version was made available online. 1,124 unique responses were received, which represents a 25.5% response rate. The final report on the findings of the survey will be published in mid-November.

- 3.2 To ensure that the survey is fully representative of the Cambridge population responses were 'weighted' by gender and age to ensure the sample matches the known profile of the Cambridge population. The sample size and weighting means that there can be a high level of confidence (+/-2.9%) that the views expressed in the survey are those of Cambridge residents.
- 3.3 The data tables that accompany the report will allow the findings to be viewed by gender, age, ethnic group and sexual identity, where the number of people in a group responding to a question is large enough to be statistically significant. The consultants also carried out a "booster" workshop with 20 low income residents to explore in more depth what they thought about the council, council services and how they can communicate with the council.
- 3.4 **Equalities training courses for staff** (action 2.2 in the Single Equality Scheme) - the Council has continued to provide training courses to ensure that all new starters understand the importance of equality and diversity, and that staff are able to further their understanding as part of their ongoing development. Since 1 April 2016, the following courses have been delivered:
 - 6 equality and diversity induction courses and 66 attendees
 - 2 disability awareness training courses (November 2016) and 13 attendees
 - 2 diversity awareness training courses and 17 attendees
 - 2 mental health awareness training courses (September 2016) and 15 attendees
 - 4 mental health first aid training courses (September 2016) and 14 attendees

- 2 transgender awareness training courses (July and November 2016), which have been attended by over 100 staff. A further 80 people from voluntary sector organisations attended a session on transgender awareness at the Diversity Forum on 19 September.

In addition to the above courses, staff within the council who are employed more specifically to work with vulnerable adults are given further, more specialised training on the needs of their customer groups. The staff are then available to give support and advice to other council officers.

- 3.5 **Digital inclusion** (action 2.4 in the Single Equality Scheme) – Funding from the Council’s Sharing Prosperity Fund is being used to take forward a number of digital inclusion projects from October 2016 onwards. A digital inclusion hub is being developed at the Meadows Community Centre, and digital training for older people is being rolled out in the Council’s sheltered housing schemes. Officers are also exploring rolling out a successful intergenerational digital project, which has brought together older people and young people, to other parts of the city. We are also jointly organising a county-wide event in Spring 2017 to map County Council, City Council and voluntary provision and ensure that City Council-funded activity does not duplicate existing provision.
- 3.6 **Taxi licensing** (action 3.1 in the Single Equality Scheme) – the Council’s Licensing Committee approved a new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy on 17 October 2016. The policy introduces accessibility and equality training, which will be encompassed within mandatory safeguarding training for all taxi drivers. Training for existing licence holders will take place from January 2017, with training for new licence applicants taking place from April 2017. There is also a code of conduct which is also applicable to licence holders to ensure good practice.
- 3.7 **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Crisis Concordat** (action 3.1 in the Single Equality Scheme) – The

Council is represented on the Delivery Board for the Concordat and is and working towards signing the Concordat. In addition to a number of city council services which provide support for people with mental health issues, the Council is working in partnership to support the delivery of a number of the actions in the Concordat, including:

- the new Mental Health Vanguard model, which includes a new county-wide First Response Service, based on an approach previously piloted in Cambridge, and a new Sanctuary Scheme in Cambridge for adults who become mentally unwell. City Council Customer Services staff and the council's team of Safeguarding Designated Officers have received briefings on the Mental Health Vanguard services.
- An Integrated Mental Health Team established in Cambridgeshire Police's control room to make initial assessments of calls from individuals suffering from mental health crisis and ensuring that they receive the right care.

3.8 **CAB outreach advice project** (action 3.1 in the Single Equality Scheme) – The Council has provided funding for the Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to provide an 'advice on prescription' outreach service since May 2015. People visiting the centre for a health appointment are offered the opportunity to meet with a CAB adviser within the practice either by being referred by a member of the practice team, including their GP through an "advice prescription", or by self-referral. GPs find that people presenting with stress, anxiety or experiencing mental health problems, exacerbated by debt, housing, employment or other welfare matters, are more likely to attend a session with a local advisor and seek resolution of a problem.

3.9 Since 1 April 2016, a CAB adviser based at East Barnwell Health Centre has carried out more than 80 appointments with local residents giving help and guidance on a range of issues such as the benefits to which they are entitled and how to manage debt. The adviser has also helped to point people to other specialist

advice on employment matters, switching energy suppliers, accessing housing advice and charitable support.

- 3.10 Following the success of the scheme in East Barnwell, which is estimated to have resulted in a total financial gain of more than £100,000 for local people, it is being extended to other areas of the city with continued Council funding. CAB will provide the outreach service for patients at Nuffield Road Medical Centre, Arbury Road Surgery (advice will be provided from the Meadows Community Centre) and Trumpington Surgery (advice will be provided at Trumpington Pavilion).

The advisors at the Meadows Community Centre and Trumpington Pavillion are currently accepting non-patients, so local people can drop-in during the scheduled sessions and either talk to, or make an appointment to talk to, a CAB advisor. This saves people making the journey to the CAB central advice centre and early indications are that these out-reach sessions are successful.

- 3.11 **World Mental Health Week activities** (action 3.1 in the Single Equality Scheme) – the Council worked with partner organisations to provide awareness raising activities and events on mental health issues for City Council staff and local communities as part of World Mental Health Week in May 2016. These included: an awareness raising event about dementia at Ditchburn Place sheltered housing scheme; the Council’s Children and Young People’s Participation Service (ChYPPS), Community Development and Housing services sharing mental health resources in the Grafton Centre; Lifecraft promoting their services at a stall in the central market; and a staff café for City Council staff to promote interaction and positive mental health.

- 3.12 **Black History Month** (action 4.1 in the Single Equality Scheme) - the Council has continued to work with partners to support and organise events to celebrate the different communities that live in Cambridge. A programme of 10 events were delivered during October 2016 to celebrate Black History Month by a range of partners, including Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge African

Network, Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, Cambridge Junction, the Museum of Cambridge, Menelik and the University of Cambridge.

- 3.13 As part of Black History Month, the Council directly organised a digital exhibition of photographs from the Imperial War Museums on the 'Contribution of Black and Commonwealth soldiers to the British Armed Forces', which was displayed throughout the month at the Museum of Cambridge and at dedicated sessions at the Guildhall and Anglia Ruskin University.
- 4.2 **Safer Spaces** (action 4.2 in the Single Equality Scheme) – The Council has used publicity materials (including posters, postcards, banners and window stickers) to promote Council facilities and activities as Safer Spaces for LGB&T customers and services users, and has continued to support the wider development of the 'Safer Spaces ' initiative by the Encompass Network.